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Book on Wilson Futile Speculation

Woodrow Wilson, 28th President of the United States, died more than 42 years ago. Now comes a book about him written by the late Sigmund Freud famed Austrian psychiatrist, and William C. Bullitt, former United States ambassador to the Soviet Union and to France. It endeavors to tie together psychoanalysis and the making of national and international policy by a chief executive of the nation.

Look magazine in its current issue prints a condensation of the book and also a rebuttal by Allen W. Dulles, former director of the Central Intelligence Agency, who calls the study "an ill-founded attack on the character of one of our great idealists." Dulles, who studied under Wilson at Princeton and knew him personally for many years, declares that there is "a deep note of bitterness in this book."

The chief point made by the authors is that Wilson had what is known as a "father complex," and from this all sorts of psychoanalytical conclusions are drawn. But Freud himself, who never had any personal contact with Wilson, admits in the book that "a more intimate knowledge of a man may lead to a more exact estimate of his achievements."

It might also have been conceded that nobody can properly make either a psychiatric study or any other analysis of a President of the United States unless there is an intimate knowledge of his day-by-day reactions to public

events and a careful examination of all his acts and utterances in the light of what was known at the time they were made.

This writer, as a student at Princeton, not only attended the lectures on constitutional government delivered by Wilson but had frequent conferences with him, particularly when, in the fourth year of the college course, it became a regular duty, on behalf of the undergraduate press club, to deal with Wilson as president of the university on subjects of news interest.

When Wilson was nominated for the presidency in 1912, the Associated Press assigned this writer to cover the campaign. For more than eight years thereafter, it was a daily responsibility to report national and international news from the White House. During that time, the writer became an intimate friend of Joseph P. Tumulty, the President's private secretary. Tumulty's admiration for the President never ceased, even though there were occasional differences of opinion. This correspondent, too, differed with Wilson on some public questions and wrote articles on certain issues pointing out that another course might have been preferable.

The authors of the new book claim that Wilson was a weak character because he "never had a fistfight in his life." Was this really true?

As the record shows, there is no question about the courage of Wilson. It required fortitude to enter World War I. It took strength of character

for him to oppose the device which the Senate sought to impose by separating the League of Nations covenant from the Versailles peace treaty. Here was a man who said in a public speech: "I would a great deal rather lose in a cause that I know some day will triumph than triumph in a cause that I know some day will lose."

If Wilson had any of the characteristics of a "father complex," they were hardly observable to those who had contact with him personally and in covering his public career.

After Wilson suffered a stroke in September 1919, he was, of course, virtually incapacitated, and decisions were made for him by members of the cabinet. But prior to that time he had the foresight to champion the concept of the League of Nations as the only solution to world peace. The United Nations, its successor, is still struggling to carry out the idea.

Wilson was one of the greatest of American Presidents. He is to be revered especially for his forthright and consistent advocacy of international and national reforms that continue in the laws and policies of today. He had his likes and dislikes, his prejudices and his convictions. But to find in the multifarious things that a President does in eight years a single psychiatric factor which allegedly influenced the making of all his policies, is to enter a field of futile speculation, especially in the absence of convincing evidence.

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